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CHRISTOPHER TRUBY

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A SKETCH OF  
CHRISTOPHER TRUBY

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BY ALICE CARY TRUBY

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PITTSBURGH  
THE EICHBAUM PRESS

1897





Nov<sup>r</sup> the 3<sup>th</sup> 1786

To the Hon<sup>ble</sup> of Mich<sup>l</sup> M<sup>ay</sup>or one of the Justices  
of the Peace for the County of Westmorland  
M<sup>ay</sup>or and one for the County of York  
Lord Biddington and Lord Howe, say their

by me

Ch<sup>as</sup> Truby

Fac-simile of Christopher Truby's receipt for payment for material furnished towards building  
Greensburg's first court house and jail.



## CHRISTOPHER TRUBY.

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Christopher Truby<sup>1</sup> was born in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, in the year 1736. He married Isabella Bowman, and, about 1771, removed to Bedford, now Westmoreland<sup>1</sup> County, Pennsylvania, and settled upon land which subsequently became a portion of the site of the town of Greensburg, the county-seat of Westmoreland.

In 1774 he was Commissioner for Westmoreland County.<sup>2</sup>

June 11th, 1777, he was commissioned one of the Justices of the Peace for Westmoreland County<sup>3</sup>. One of the duties of the Justices of Westmoreland at that

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<sup>1</sup> Westmoreland County was formed of a part of Bedford, February 26th, 1773.

<sup>2</sup> See list of Commissioners in History of Westmoreland County, by George Dallas Albert.

<sup>3</sup> Pennsylvania Archives, Second Series (reprint 1890), Volume III, page 681.



time was to administer the oath of allegiance, of which the following is an example :

“<sup>4</sup>I do Hereby Cartyfi that philiph Cons<sup>5</sup>, of Westmoreland County, Hath voluntarily taken and Subscribd the oath Affirmation of allegiance and fidelity as Directed by an act of general assembly of peenSylvana passed the 13th Day of June at 1777, witness my hand and Seal the 1 Day of June at 1778.

(L. S.)

CHRISTO’R TRUBY.”

<sup>b</sup>In February, 1778, he was Captain in the Westmoreland Militia—his young son, Michael, acting as drummer whenever the company was called into service.

<sup>c</sup>During the Revolutionary War, Christopher Truby was the owner of a block-house or fort, crected upon his premises in Hempfield Township, Westmoreland County, which was occupied by his family and the people of his neighborhood as a place of safety and defense against the enemy, and from which frequently went out scouting expeditions against the Indians.

<sup>d</sup>August 18th, 1784, he was re-elected a Justice of the Peace and a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Westmoreland County.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Published in History of Westmoreland County. See page 499.

<sup>5</sup> Philip Kuhns.

<sup>6</sup> Pennsylvania Archives, Second Series, (reprint 1890,) Volume III, pages 680 and 682.



In 1787 he and James Guthrie were appointed Wood Rangers for Westmoreland County. They had the following notice inserted in the *Pittsburgh Gazette*:

“The subscribers being appointed wood rangers for Westmoreland county, by the worshipful bench of said county, inform all persons who may take up stray horses, cows, sheep, &c. immediately to enter them with us at Greensburgh, or they will be dealt with according to the law.

CHRISTOPHER TRUBY.  
JAMES GUTHRIE.”

GREENSBURGH, Jan. 19, 1787.

1790: Christopher Truby was Lieutenant-Colonel in General Harmar's campaign against the Indians. He and Major James Paull commanded the battalion of Pennsylvania Militia<sup>7</sup>.

1794: He was one of the signers of a letter addressed to General William Jack by the inhabitants of Westmoreland County<sup>8</sup>.

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7 “In the evening [October 1st, 1790], I was joined by Col. Truby of the Penna. Militia, with such of the cattle as had been left behind at Fort Washington.”—Harmar's letter to the Secretary of War, dated November 23d, 1790. In *Annals of the West*, published by James R. Albach, Pittsburgh, 1858, the name of the commanding officer of the Pennsylvania Militia is incorrectly given as “Trubleby.” The same error is made in Frazer E. Wilson's *Treaty of Greenville*.

8 This letter is to be found in Volume IV of the Second Series Pennsylvania Archives, page 65.





The records of the Pennsylvania Land Office show Christopher Truby to have been the owner of three tracts of land situated in Hempfield Township, Westmoreland County, which were acquired by purchase from the State. Two of them were surveyed on warrants to him, and the third on an application entered by Philip Fusselman. The earliest of the warrants is dated August 16th, 1784, and was surveyed October 13th, 1784. It contained 275 acres adjoining lands of Dewalt Mechlin<sup>9</sup> and Philip Kuhns. The next is a warrant dated December 5th, 1785, and surveyed December 5th, 1787. It comprised 202 acres which lay on a branch of Sewickley Creek and adjoined lands of William Jack and others. The warrant for this tract included an improvement made in the year 1772.

Greensburg was laid out upon land owned by Christopher Truby and Gen. William Jack—they contributing, for the nominal sum of a sixpence, ground upon which to erect a court-house and prison, as evinced by the following :

<sup>10</sup>Article of Agreement made and concluded on between Christopher Truby and William Jack of the one part and Benja-

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<sup>9</sup> Also written Macklin and Mechling.

<sup>10</sup> Published in Albert's History of Westmoreland County.



min Davis, Michael Rough, and Hugh Martin, Esquires, Justices for the County of Westmoreland, witnesseth:

That the said Christopher Truby and William Jack doth hereby grant, bargain, and sell unto the said Benjamin Davis, Michael Rough, and Hugh Martin, Trustees, a certain piece of land situate and being in Hempfield township, on the North Branch of Sewickley, containing two acres, for the use of erecting a court-house and prison, for the consideration of sixpence lawful money of the State of Pennsylvania to us in hand paid, the receipt we do hereby acknowledge [and] ourselves fully satisfied; and the said Christopher Truby and William Jack doth hereby bind themselves, their heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns to make clear patent free from encumbrance to the said Benjamin Davis, Michael Rough, and Hugh Martin, Trustees, or their successors, and the said Christopher Truby and William Jack do hereby promise the said trustees to lay out a certain quantity of land for the use of a county town containing sixty acres, viz.: Running thence south twenty east 106 perches, south forty-three east 80 perches, north seventy-five east 40 perches, and north four and one-half north 135 perches to a post south seventy-five west to the place of beginning. And to allow the inhabitants of said town free incourse and recourse to the North Branch and West Branch at certain places, as the said trustees shall think proper, and to any injury to the bottom on said waters, and the said Christopher Truby and William Jack doth hereby promise to sell the said Lot[s] of ground at the rate of forty-five shillings per lot, and we do hereby bind ourselves in the penalty of two thousand pounds for the true performance of the above agreement as witness our hands and seals the tenth day of December, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-five.

CHRISTOPHER TRUBY. (Seal.)

WILLIAM JACK. (Seal.)

Sealed and delivered in the presence of }  
William McGee. }

Recorded in Book "B," page 287.



Christopher Truby died February 20th, 1802, and is buried in the German Cemetery, Greensburg. A stone at the head of his grave bears the inscription "Here lies the Body of Colonel Christ. Truby, Esq., who departed this Life ye 20th day of February 1802. Aged 66." Close beside lies the body of Isabella, his wife, who died August 24th, 1801, aged sixty-three years.

Colonel Truby was the father of seven children—four sons, Michael, Christopher, Jr., Jacob and John—and three daughters. No known likeness of him exists. He has been described as wearing red-topped boots, and his hair in a black silk bag.





## NOTES.

*a* Among the persons naturalized in Pennsylvania Supreme Court, held at Philadelphia the 25th, 26th and 27th days of September, 1740, "having resided the space of seven years and upwards in his Majesty's Colonies in America," was Christopher Trewbey of Bucks County, presumably the father of the subject of this sketch. Pennsylvania Archives, Second Series, Volume II, page 350.

*b* From manuscript record in possession of Dr. Wm. H. Egle, State Librarian, Harrisburg, and also Michael Truby's pension statement, 1837. It is quite probable that Christopher Truby commanded the Westmoreland Militia for a longer period than that of which official record has been preserved. Michael Truby states that his father commanded the drafted militia company of the neighborhood and that *he* was in service as drummer for about three years and eight months.

One of the members of Capt. Truby's company in February, 1778, was Philip Drum, born in Moore, Northampton County, Pennsylvania, in the year 1752. He had previously served in Capt. Nicholas Kern's company, Northampton County Battalion of the "Flying Camp," commanded by Peter Kechlein, enlisting July 9th, 1776, and was engaged in the battle of Long Island, August 27th, 1776. (Penn-



sylvania Archives, Second Series, Volume XIV, page 566.) In December, 1778, he enlisted in Capt. John Cribbs' company of Westmoreland Militia. His death occurred in Franklin Township, Westmoreland County, about 1844.

*c* Michael Truby's pension statement. This was probably the block-house known as "Fort Allen," from which, in 1774, the inhabitants of Hempfield Township, Westmoreland County, anticipating an Indian outbreak, petitioned Gov. Penn for protection. The petition was headed from "Fort Allen, Hempfield Township, between Wendel Ourys and Christopher Trubee," and the first two, of the upwards of seventy signatures, are those of Wendel Ourry and Christopher Truby. See Rupp's History of Western Pennsylvania, appendix, page 259. Also, Frontier Forts of Pennsylvania, Volume II, page 373.

"WEDNESDAY, August 18th, 1784.

*d* Christopher Trueby, John Moore and Matthew Jack, Esquires, were appointed and commissioned to be Justices of the Peace in and for the county of Westmoreland, upon a return made according to law for the district of Hanna's Town and Hempfield township. And the said Christopher Trueby, John Moore and Matthew Jack were also appointed and commissioned to be Justices of the county Court of Common Pleas in and for the said county of Westmoreland." From Pennsylvania Colonial Records, Volume XIV, page 180.





























